Pius Cheung – Percussionist, Composer & Educator

"… [Pius Cheung] surmounts the contrapuntal hurdles and offers a stylish, deeply expressive interpretation [of the Goldberg Variations] notable for its clear voicing, eloquent phrasing and wide range of color and dynamics."

- The New York Times

"Tuneful, neo-Romantic yet technically difficult, [Pius Cheung's Études] not only showcased Mr. Cheung's mastery of his instrument but also demonstrated his considerable skill and promise as a composer in his own right – one who writes the kind of music people will want to hear."

- The Washington Times

Hailed by the New York Times as "deeply expressive" for his groundbreaking recording of Bach's Goldberg Variations on solo marimba, Pius Cheung is widely known as one of the most important percussionists of his generation. Highlights of his recent engagements include concerto appearances with the Edmonton Symphony (Canada), Opole Sinfonietta (Poland), Hong Kong Philharmonic, and Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, with whom he performed his arrangement of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue for an audience of 20,000+. In addition, he has also presented solo recitals at venues such as Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, National Concert Hall in Taipei, Kyoto Arts Center (Japan), as well as music festivals around the globe such as the Usedom Music Festival (Germany), Manchester Music Festival, Hong Kong Arts Festival, Taiwan International Percussion Convention, Chiapas International Marimba Festival (Mexico), Drum Fest (Poland), Percussion Plus Festival (Denmark), Italy PAS International Percussion Festival, Osaka Percussion Festival and Shenyang International Percussion Festival (China).

Since his debut album of the Goldberg Variations, he has released two more albums of music by Bach: Cellos Suites, and Lute Suites; as well as an album of his own compositions, Symphonic Poem. He has also recorded all the percussion works of renowned composer, Bright Sheng, including his marimba concerto Colours of Crimson with the Hong Kong Philharmonic.

As one of the most sought-after composers for percussion today, Pius Cheung's latest works include Allegro Brutale, commissioned by Dame Evelyn Glennie in celebration of her 50th birthday; Heaven and Earth, a 40-minute ballet for percussion ensemble and dancers; Yuen, for piano and percussion quartet, commissioned by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council; two percussion concerti, Princess Chang Ping and Heaven and Earth, commissioned by the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra; Theater, Resonance, and Zen, a percussion duo concerto for the Taiwan Chinese Orchestra; Synced/UnSynced, a work designed to be played and recorded live with remote ensemble of free instrumentation; Samsara, for violin, clarinet, cello, piano, and percussion, commissioned by the Moab Music Festival; and Hibiki, a marimba concerto for the Eugene Symphony Orchestra.

An inspiring teacher to young percussionists, Mr. Cheung frequently serves as a competition judge at national and international competitions, as well as presents masterclasses at renowned institutions such as the Juilliard School, Curtis Institute of Music, Manhattan School of Music, Amsterdam Conservatory, Paris Conservatory, Berklee Valencia, Toho Gakuen (Japan) and Beijing Central Conservatory.

A native of Hong Kong, Mr. Cheung moved to Vancouver at the age of 12. He received his Bachelor of Music from the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, his Artist Diploma from The Boston Conservatory, and his Doctorate from the University of Michigan. He endorses Yamaha, Zildjian, Remo, and Innovative Percussion, which produces his signature mallet series. Mr. Cheung is currently a Professor and Chair of the Percussion Area at the University of Oregon.